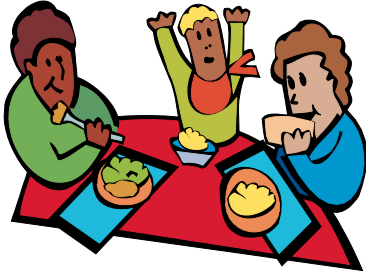


EATING HABITS

One of the greatest health problems Americans face is being overweight. The foods we eat and our eating habits tend to add unwanted pounds quickly. Unfortunately, children often pick these eating habits up. Children who are overweight are more likely to become overweight adults. What can you do to encourage good eating habits?



- Allow your child to monitor his own hunger. Don't force a child to clean a plate if he is full.
- Make family meals a pleasant occasion. Provide a variety of foods and a stress-free atmosphere.
- Provide healthy snacks such as fresh fruits or whole grain crackers. Avoid foods high in sugar, salt and fat such as potato chips or candy.
- Take advantage of a child's natural activity. Encourage lots of physical activity.
- Avoid too much television watching. This cuts down on physical activity. Food commercials often encourage eating.
- If your child doesn't like a food prepared one way, try seasoning or cooking it another way.

If your child is overweight, don't start a crash diet. Talk it over with his doctor. Gradually try to change eating and exercise habits. Encourage healthy habits by being a good model yourself.

HEALTH

Youngsters usually suffer from a variety of illnesses over the years. When should you call the doctor or treat the symptoms yourself? By now you may have learned to recognize symptoms that need a doctor's attention. Severe diarrhea with a chance of dehydration can be dangerous.

The best way to treat diarrhea in order to prevent dehydration is to give your child an oral rehydration solution, such as Rehydralite®, Pedialyte® or Ricelyte®.* Drinks high in sugar can make the diarrhea worse. Soft drinks, undiluted apple juice and gelatin should be avoided at this time. Water and food may be given along with the oral hydration solution, if the child is hungry. Start with starchy foods such as rice, noodles, potatoes, cereals, breads, crackers or bananas. Add meats, poultry, fish, cooked vegetables, fruits, yogurt and milk over the next three days as the child desires. Fevers that last more than three or four days may signal serious illness. Whenever you are in doubt, call the doctor!

* The mention of these brand names does not imply endorsement or disapproval of brands omitted.

Next Issue: Questions, play and more games!

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Putting Knowledge to Work

The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service, the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

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Gale A. Buchanan, Dean and Director

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1-2-3 Grow!

34-36 MONTHS

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
The University of Georgia
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34-36 Months

1-2-3 Grow!

Your toddler is almost 3 years old! What an exciting year this has been. Take time now to look back and think about all the things your child has learned. Amazing! Give your toddler an extra hug today just for working so hard.

HOW DOES YOUR TODDLER GROW?

From 34 to 36 months of age, toddlers love to take things apart and put them back together. Her attention span has also increased so that she may work for a long time on a special project. Toddlers are also excited about their creations and shout, “Look what I made!”

Imaginary play is increasing, too. You may overhear your child talking to an imaginary playmate. Don’t worry — having imaginary friends may be a sign of creativity. Dramatic play, including dressing up in old clothes and costumes, is fun.

Have you noticed your child’s body lately? As she approaches 3 years old, the chubbiness of toddlerhood will disappear, legs have lengthened and straightened, and her head no longer looks too large for such a small body. Your child is taking on the proportions of a child rather than a baby. Time spent sleeping may be decreasing now. Morning naps have probably ended.

Many toddlers insist that they do not need an afternoon nap, but a quiet time in the afternoon is still important. Even if your child does not sleep, reserve an hour or so for quiet rest in her room. This helps her to relax and prevents over-tiredness later in the day.

Typical illness such as colds often have no cure except a few days of rest and mild medications to ease discomfort. If symptoms last more than a few days or high fever remains, call your doctor. Many times an office visit is not needed. Doctors and their assistants are often willing to talk with you over the phone about symptoms to determine the nature of an illness.

As your child’s third birthday approaches, make an appointment for a regular physical exam, even if your child is not sick. This is a good time to check on growth and development, and to make sure immunizations are up-to-date.

EXPRESSING FEELINGS

You can teach your child how to behave but not how to feel. Feelings mostly just happen. An important part of emotional development is dealing with those feelings inside us and learning how to express them.

Teach your child that all his emotions are okay. It is the way he expresses them that may be right or wrong. Anger can be felt, but not expressed by hitting another person. A more acceptable way to express anger is through words or physical activity.

You can help your child accept his or her feelings by saying, “Sounds like you’re mad because Adam took the ball.” Never tell a child that he is a “bad boy” or “bad girl.” Remember the difference between feelings and behavior — the feelings are okay, it is the behavior that may be unacceptable.

ACTIVITIES/GAMES/TOYS

Dress-up

Collect a box of old clothes, hats and shoes that your child can use to dress up. Let your child use his imagination to come up with different costumes and characters. Encourage imaginary play by playing along. By the way, playing dress-up is great for girls and boys.

Make a Book

You can make a book with your child using favorite pictures cut from magazines. Paste the pictures onto sturdy paper. Put the book together by punching holes in the paper and tying with yarn. Encourage your child to make up a story to go along with the pictures. Print the story under the pictures and read it together!

Make a Bean Bag

Children enjoy watching (and helping with) the process of things being put together. A simple sewing project your can do is making a bean bag from scraps of fabric. Sew two 5-inch squares of fabric together on three sides, then fill with dried navy or pinto beans. Sew the fourth side.

Play catch games or toss the bag into a cardboard box or through a circle cut in cardboard.

The feel and sound of beans are a new experience for many children.

Finger Play

Finger play helps children improve muscle control. It also encourages listening skills, use of new words and ideas about numbers. Here are a few fun finger plays. At first, your child will enjoy watching your motions and listening to the rhymes. Soon she will try to repeat the words and finger plays, too.



Little Rabbit

*Run, little rabbit;
climb up here.
He is so hungry,
he nibbles in my ear.*

(Make fingers run up arm and gently pinch your ear.)

Jack-in-the-box

*Jack-in-the-box
sits so still.*

*Won't you come out?
Yes, I will.*

(Bury thumbs in fist, then pop them out, or child crouches on floor, then jumps up.)

The Butterfly

*One, two, three, four, five —
I caught a butterfly;
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten —
I let him go again.*



(Raise fingers on one hand as you count to five, then grab the butterfly. Raise fingers again for six through 10, then throw hands up in air as though letting butterfly go.)

CLEANING UP

Unfortunately, toddlers and parents usually do not share the same ideas about cleanliness and organization. Most parents agree that a request to “Please pick up your toys,” is not well understood by toddlers, but many parent expectations can be taught. Making cleanup a fun and routine part of the day will help build organizing skills. Make a game out of cleanup time; put on some lively music and “race those cars back into the garage.” At the same time, recognize that your standards of cleanliness may be unreasonable (and even unnecessary) for your toddler’s play areas. In the big picture, disagreements and hurt feelings over such issues may do more harm than good.